

TAX DEADLINE NEARS -- EXTENSIONS, INSTALLMENT PLANS AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON -- With the tax filing deadline just two weeks away, the Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers that it has help for those who can't complete their forms on time or can't pay what they owe.

You can get an extra four months to file by sending Form 4868 to the IRS by Apr. 15. The extended deadline will be Aug. 17 this year, since Aug. 15 falls on a weekend. This filing extension does not give you more time to pay any taxes owed. You must estimate your total tax liability when requesting the extension. You may pay any projected balance due with the Form 4868, but if you can't pay the full amount, you can still get the extension.

Interest charges apply to any tax not paid by Apr. 15. The current rate is eight percent a year, compounded daily, and is subject to change each calendar quarter. You may also be liable for a late payment penalty of 0.5 percent per month if the total you have paid by Apr. 15 is less than 90 percent of your actual 1997 tax.

You may download Form 4868 to your computer through the IRS Web site at www.irs.ustreas.gov. Those with a fax machine may use the IRS TaxFax by calling 703-368-9694 and request Item #13141 by return fax. Form 4868 is also available at local IRS offices and many public libraries.

(more)

If you've completed your tax forms, but can't pay the full amount owed, you should still file your return on time, to avoid the late filing penalty, which is five percent per month of the balance due. Send as large a payment as possible with your return, to lessen any interest and penalty charges.

You may ask the IRS for an installment payment plan when you file. Attach Form 9465 to the front of your tax return, listing the amount you propose to pay each month and on which day. You may download Form 9465 via computer from the IRS Web site or receive it from TaxFax -- item #14842. The IRS will let you know within 30 days if your proposal is accepted. There is a \$43 fee for setting up the installment payment plan, which will be added to your first payment.

When sending a payment, make the check out to "Internal Revenue Service" -- not "IRS." Be sure the check includes your name, address, Social Security number, a daytime phone number, the tax year and the form you filed. Do not attach your check to your tax form, and do not include any 1998 estimated tax payment.

As of March 27, the IRS had received more than 61.4 million returns, nearly half the total expected this year. E-filing options continue their growth in popularity, with 20.6 million returns filed either by computer or by phone, a 25 percent increase from this point last year. Each e-filing type has surpassed its total for all of 1997.

The IRS has processed more than 48 million refunds, totalling nearly \$67 billion. At \$1381, the average refund is up four percent from this time last year.

1998 FILING SEASON STATISTICS

Cumulative through the week ending 3/28/97 and 3/27/98

	<u>1997</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Individual Income Tax Returns (electronic and paper)			
Total Receipts	61,042,000	61,434,000	0.6
Total Processed	50,891,000	53,788,000	5.7
E-filing -- Total Receipts:			
Standard E-file	12,583,000	15,660,000	24.5
TeleFile	3,933,000	4,955,000	26.0
Refunds Certified by the Martinsburg Computing Center:			
Number	46,335,000	48,266,000	4.2
Amount	\$61.499 billion	\$66.639 billion	8.4
Average Refund	\$1327	\$1381	4.0
Direct Deposit Refunds:			
Number	13,307,000	15,354,000	15.4
Amount	\$24.218 billion	\$28.466 billion	17.5